



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Sacramento Fish & Wildlife Office
Species Account
KECK'S CHECKERMALLOW
Sidalcea keckii



CLASSIFICATION: Endangered

Federal Register Notice 65:7757; February 16, 2000

www.fws.gov/ecos/ajax/docs/federal_register/fr3523.pdf
(151 KB)

STATE LISTING STATUS AND CNPS CODE:

The California Native Plant Society has placed Keck's checkermallow on List 1B (rare or endangered throughout its range). The State of California has not listed it.

CRITICAL HABITAT: Designated

Federal Register 68:12863; March 18, 2009

www.fws.gov/ecos/ajax/docs/federal_register/fr4077.pdf
(393 KB)

RECOVERY PLAN: None

5-YEAR REVIEW: Completed December 2007. No change recommended

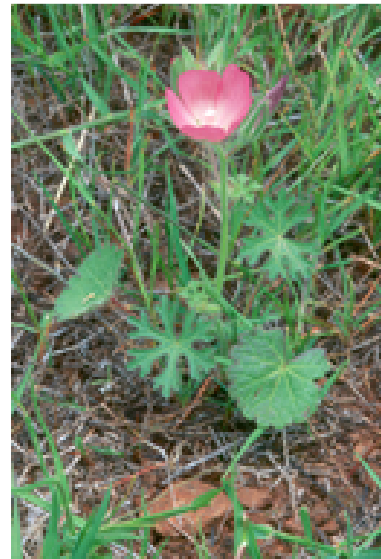
www.fws.gov/ecos/ajax/docs/five_year_review/doc1870.pdf
(406 KB)

DESCRIPTION:

Keck's checkermallow (*Sidalcea keckii*), also known as Keck's sidalcea or Keck's checkerbloom, is an annual herb in the mallow family (Malvaceae). Better known members of this family include cotton, okra and hibiscus. Plants grow 1.5 to 3.3 decimeters (6-13 inches) tall, with slender, erect stems that are hairy along their entire length.

Leaves towards the base of the plant have a roughly circular outline and seven to nine shallow lobes arranged somewhat like the fingers of a hand (palmate). Leaves farther up the plant have fewer lobes which are more deeply divided. Both types of leaves also have irregular serrations at their margins forming "teeth."

Keck's checkermallow blooms in April and early May, producing five petalled flowers that are either solid pink or pink with a maroon center. A single plant produces one or the other type of flower but not both. Petals are 0.4 to 0.8 inches long. They are often shallowly notched at their outermost margins. Below the petals is a smaller *calyx* (cuplike structure) formed by five narrow green *sepals* (modified leaves). Each sepal is 0.3 to 0.4 inch long, with a maroon line running down its center. Below the calyx are modified leaflike structures called *bracts*, which are much shorter than the sepals and are either undivided or divided into two threadlike lobes.



Keck's Checkermallow
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Fruits consist of four to five wedge shaped sections arranged in a disk. Each section contains a single seed. Sections mature and separate in May, but their methods of dispersal are currently unknown. They may simply rely on gravity. Also unknown are the seeds' requirements for germination, their typical germination dates, and how long the seeds remain viable in the soil. Based on what we know about other Malvaceae species and on the extreme yearly fluctuations in above-ground plants, it is likely that seeds remain viable for several years and form a soil seed bank.

The primary pollinators of Keck's checkermallow are also unknown, but related species are pollinated by various solitary bees, bumble bees and bee flies.

Sidalcea keckii closely resembles two other annual species of *Sidalcea*, *Sidalcea calycosa* and *S. diploscyha*, that have ranges overlapping *S. keckii*. See Jepson Manual, below, for a more detailed description.

DISTRIBUTION:

Sidalcea keckii is endemic to California and grows in relatively open areas on grassy slopes of the Sierra foothills. See the 5-year review, above, for details.

U.S. Geological Survey 7.5 Minute Quads: White River (286D) 3511877, Success Dam (309C)* 3611818, Porterville (310D)* 3611911, Humphreys Station (377B) 3611984, Piedra (377C) 3611974, Pine Flat Dam (377D) 3611973, Yosemite Lake (421B) 3712044, Birds Landing (481A) 3812127, Monticello Dam (515D) 3812251, Jericho Valley (532C) 3812274, Knoxville (532D) 3812273, Manor Slough (547A) 3912223, Lodoga (563C) 3912234, Gilmore Peak (564D) 3912235 (*Presumed extirpated)

THREATS:

Keck's checkerbloom is threatened by urban development, competition from non-native grasses, agricultural land conversion, and random events.

REFERENCES FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

[General references about California plants](#)

www.fws.gov/sacramento/es/plant_spp_accts/plant_references.htm

[The Jepson Manual: Higher Plants of California](#). This is the standard reference about California plants. The Manual is available in an [online version](#). See also the [Jepson Online Interchange](#) for updates.

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